

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT MOSCOW 2184 SENT ACTION SECSTATE FEB 14.
QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 02184

E.O.11652:GDS

TAGS:EALR, EEWT, ETRD, UR

SUBJECT: GOSPLAN COMMENTS

SUMMARY. GOSPLAN DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES, MORDVINOV, HAS ADVISED OF SYMPOSIUM NEXT MTNTH IN ENGLAND WHERE SOVIETS WILL MAKE IMPORTANT STATEMENTS ON USSR ECONOMY. HE DESCRIBED RANK ORDER OF USSR TRADE PARTNERS FOR 1977, NUMBERS 1-7, AS FRG, JAPAN, USA, FRANCE, ITALY, FINLAND AND UK. IN CONTRAST TO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE PROPHECIES OF FURTHER DECLINE IN US-SOVIET TRADE. MORDVINOV PREDICTED UPSWING BEGINNING 1978. HE REITERATED SOVIET POSITION THAT USSR WILL EVENTUALLY BE SELF-SUFFICIENT IN AGRICULTURE AND ASSERTED VOA WOULD HAVE MORE IMPACT ON SOVIET AUDIENCES IF IT SPENT LESS TIME DISCUSSING PROBLEM OF SOVIET DISSIDENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN COURSE OF EXTENDED LUNCHEON WITH EC COUNSELOR AND EMBOFF ON FEBRUARY 10, GOSPLAN DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES, MORDVINOV, CONFIDENTIAL

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VOTED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO SUBJECT(WHICH HE INITIATED) OF IMPENDING (LATE MARCH) TRIP OF DELEGATION OF IMPORTANT SOVIET PLANNERS, FOREIGN TRADE OFFICIALS AND EXPERTS IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS TO BRIGHTON, ENGLAND. MORDVINOV SAID SOVIET DELEGATES WILL BE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE SUSHKOV, GOSPLAN DEPUTY CHAIRMAN INOZEMTSEV, SCST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN GVISHIANI, HIMSELF

(MORDVINOV), A LOWER LEVEL EXPERT, AND A NEW LIGHT (PLYATKOV, PLYATNEV OR PLATONOV) WHO, HE SAID, IS ABOUT TO BE ELEVATED TO RANK OF A DEPUTY MINISTER (APPARENTLY IN MFT). MORDVINOV WENT TO LENGTHS TO CONVEY IDEA THAT IMPORTANT STATEMENTS ON SOVIET ECONOMY, INCLUDING 1977 PERFORMANCE, WOULD BE MADE DURING BRIGHTON SYMPOSIUM. HE REGRETTED HE COULD NOT GO INTO SUBSTANCE AT PRESENT TIME AS PROCESS ON FINALIZATION OF PRESENTATIONS STILL UNDERWAY.

2. DELVING BRIEFLY INTO SPECIFICS OF FOREIGN TRADE, MORDVINOV SAID STATISTICS JUST JELLING SHOWED USSR'S LEADING TRADE PARTNERS FOR 1977, IN RANK ORDER, HAD BEEN FRG, JAPAN, USA, FRANCE, ITALY, FINLAND AND UK. HE INDICATED ACTUAL NUMBERS NEARING POINT WHERE THEY COULD BE PUBLISHED.

3. ON US-USSR TRADE, REMINDED OF GOSPLAN CHAIRMAN BAYBAKOV'S REMARKS ON 1978 ECONOMIC PLAN, HE ENDORSED PERCEPTION OF INCREASING TRADE BETWEEN US AND USSR BEGINNING IN 1978. WHEN HE WAS REMINDED THAT MFT OFFICIALS CONTINUE TO PREDICT FURTHER DECLINE IN SUCH TRADE, PERHAPS TO ZERO (SEE SEPTTEL ON FEBRUARY 9 MEETING WITH MFT DEPUTY MINISTER MANZHULO), MORDVINOV SAID GOSPLAN IS IN FAR SUPERIOR POSITION TO THAT OF MFT TO KNOW WHAT SOVIET INTENTIONS REALLY ARE. (MORDVINOV: "WE ARE THE ONLY ORGANIZATION IN THE WORLD WHICH KNOWS MORE ABOUT THE SOVIET CONFIDENTIAL

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ECONOMY THAN THE CIA.")

4. EC COUNSELOR ASKED WHETHER RECENT STATEMENTS ON 101 PERCENT FULFILLMENT OIL PRODUCTION PLAN, COMBINED WITH ACTUAL PRODUCTION FIGURES BELOW PUBLISHED PLAN, DID NOT IN FACT INDICATE THAT PLAN HAD BEEN OFFICIALLY REDUCED. MORDVINOV SAID THAT WOULD BE A QUESTION FOR HIS BOSSES.

5. MORDVINOV ECHOED RECENT PREDICTIONS THAT USSR WOULD EVENTUALLY BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT IN AGRICULTURE. HE WOULD NOT BE DRAWN OUT, HOWEVER, ON WHERE INCREASED PRODUCTION WOULD COME FROM AND DID NOT RESPOND TO EC COUNSELOR'S QUESTION, WHETHER HE ENDORSED "NEW LANDS" PROGRAM OR FELT EMPHASIS SHOULD BE ON NON-BLACK EARTH AREA OF RFSFR.

6. SPEAKING WITH HIS CHARACTERISTIC BLEND OF SINCERITY AND BANTER, MORDVINOV DELIVERED A BRIEF CRITICAL LECTURE ON VOA PROGRAMMING, NOTING WITH CHUCKLE THAT HE OUGHT NOT TO BE GIVING VOA ADVICE ON HOW TO IMPROVE ITS ACCEPTANCE BY SOVIET AUDIENCES. HE SAID PROGRAM CONTENT, NOW OFTEN HEAVILY ORIENTED TOWARD HANDFUL OF SPECIFIC SMALL PROBLEMS WHICH UNREPRESENTATIVE OF SPECTRUM OF LIFE IN SOVIET UNION,

TENDED TO ALIENATE SOVIET LISTENERS. IN RESPONSE TO OUR CAPSULE BACKGROUNDER ON ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS IN ANGLO-AMERICAN TRADITION, MORDVINOV SAID SOVIET MENTALITY SUCH THAT OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF SOVIET CITIZENS REACT NEGATIVELY TO CURRENT TRENDS IN VOA REPORTING ON USSR (HE CITED RECENT "LABOR UNION" AND DISSIDENT REPORTING). HE SAID HIS OWN WIFE USED TO LISTEN REGULARLY, BUT NOW REFUSES TO DO SO AND CRITICIZES HIM FOR CONTINUING TO LISTEN. MORDVINOV WAS ALSO UNIMPRESSED BY RECAP OF RECENT POLICY DEBATE IN OFFICIAL WASHINGTON ON QUESTION OF CONTROL OVER VOA PROGRAMMING CONTENT.

7. COMMENT. LUNCHEON WAS IN REPAYMENT FOR ONE AE HOSTED FOR MORDVINOV SHORTLY BEFORE HE LEFT ON MULTI-REGIONAL CONFIDENTIAL

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SEMINAR IN US IN 1977. HE HAD BEEN PRECLUDED FROM DOING SO EARLIER DUE TO WHAT HIS SIDEKICK DVORETS IMPLIED WAS A PROHIBITION FROM HIGHER AUTHORITY. MORDVINOV IS ONE OF USSR'S MOST PROLIFIC TRAVELERS AND WILL BE GOING TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND AFTER THE BRIGHTON CONFERENCE. MORDVINOV IS UNUSUALLY LOQUACIOUS FOR A RELATIVELY SENIOR SOVIET FUNCTIONARY. HIS MISSION IS CLEARLY ON THE PUBLIC RELATIONS SIDE OF GOSPLAN, RATHER THAN THE PLANNING END (HIS COLLEAGUE, BOBROV, SAID MORDVINOV'S SECTION "DOES NO PLANNING"), AND HE IS NOT INVARIABLY WELL INFORMED ABOUT DETAILS. HE SEEMS, HOWEVER, ANXIOUS TO SEE IMPROVED US-SOVIET RELATIONS AND SPOKE IMPATIENTLY DURING THE LUNCHEON OF SMALL COUNTRIES WHICH FIND FAULT WITH THIS CONCEPT. MATLOCK UNQUOTE VANCE

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